

CLAIMS

1. (Amended) An ion elution unit generating metal ions by applying a voltage between electrodes,

wherein a space is secured between the electrodes and an inner surface of a casing of
5 the ion elution unit.

2. (Amended) The ion elution unit according to claim 1,
wherein an interval between the electrodes becomes narrower from an upstream side
to a downstream side with respect to a water current flowing through an inside of a casing of
10 the ion elution unit.

3. (Amended) The ion elution unit according to claim 2,
wherein terminals that are so laid as to run from the electrodes out of the casing of the
ion elution unit are disposed on the upstream side with respect to the water current flowing
15 through the inside of the casing, and a supporting portion for supporting downstream-side
parts of the electrodes is formed on the inner surface of the casing.

4. (Amended) The ion elution unit according to claim 2,
wherein a water inflow port and a water outflow port are formed in the casing of the
20 ion elution unit, and the water outflow port is given a larger cross-sectional area than the
water inflow port.

5. (Amended) The ion elution unit according to claim 2,
wherein a cross-sectional area of an interior space of the casing gradually decreases

from the upstream side to the downstream side.

6. (Amended) The ion elution unit according to claim 1,
wherein a water inflow port and a water outflow port are formed in the casing of
5 the ion elution unit, and the water outflow port is located in a lowest position within an
interior space of the casing.

7. (Amended) The ion elution unit according to one of claims 1 to 6,
wherein, of the electrodes, any positive electrode is made of one of silver, copper,
10 zinc, or silver-copper alloy.

8. (Amended) The ion elution unit according to one of claims 1 to 6,
wherein, of the electrodes, both positive and negative electrodes are made of one of
silver, copper, zinc, or silver-copper alloy.

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9. (Amended) The ion elution unit according to claim 8,
wherein polarities of the electrodes are reversed periodically.

10. (Amended) An appliance comprising the ion elution unit according to
20 claim 8, wherein the metal ions generated by the ion elution unit are used by being added to
water.

11. (Amended) An appliance comprising the ion elution unit according to
claim 9, wherein the metal ions generated by the ion elution unit are used by being added to

water

12. (Amended) The appliance according to claim 10,
wherein the appliance is a washing machine.

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13. (Amended) The appliance according to claim 11,
wherein the appliance is a washing machine.

14. (Amended) An ion elution unit that generates metal ions by applying a
10 voltage between electrodes,
wherein terminals that are so laid as to run from the electrodes out of a casing of the
ion elution unit are formed in a position inward of ends of the electrodes located on an
upstream side with respect to a water current flowing through an inside of the casing.

15 15. (Amended) The ion elution unit according to claim 14,
wherein the terminals that are so laid as to run out of the casing of the ion elution unit
are formed integrally with the electrodes.

16. (Amended) The ion elution unit according to claim 14,
20 wherein the terminals that are so laid as to run from the electrodes out of the casing of
the ion elution unit have parts thereof located inside the casing protected with a sleeve made
of an insulating material.

17. (Amended) The ion elution unit according to claim 14,

wherein the terminals laid from the electrodes are so formed as to penetrate a bottom wall of the casing of the ion elution unit and protrude downward.

18. (Newly-Added) The ion elution unit according to one of claims 14 to 17,
5 wherein, of the electrodes, any positive electrode is made of one of silver, copper, zinc, or silver-copper alloy.

19. (Newly-Added) The ion elution unit according to one of claims 14 to 17,
wherein, of the electrodes, both positive and negative electrodes are made of one of
10 silver, copper, zinc, or silver-copper alloy.

20. (Newly-Added) The ion elution unit according to claim 19,
wherein polarities of the electrodes are reversed periodically.

15 21. (Newly-Added) An appliance comprising the ion elution unit according to claim 19, wherein the metal ions generated by the ion elution unit are used by being added to water.

22. (Newly-Added) An appliance comprising the ion elution unit according to
20 claim 20, wherein the metal ions generated by the ion elution unit are used by being added to water

23. (Newly-Added) The appliance according to claim 21,
wherein the appliance is a washing machine.

24. (Newly-Added) The appliance according to claim 22,
wherein the appliance is a washing machine.